

"To Thee O Lord," by Kalinnokoff .....Choir

*Announcer, Richard L. Evans:* We close now from Temple Square with a chorus from Mendelssohn's "Elijah," combining a scriptural text from Isaiah and the Psalms—"And then shall your light break forth as the light of morning breaketh—Lord, our Creator, how excellent thy name is in all the nations! Thou fillest heaven with thy glory!"

"And then shall your Light Break Forth," by Mendelssohn  
.....Choir

The Tabernacle Choir was conducted by J. Spencer Cornwall. Alexander Schreiner was at the organ.

The Choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "O Say, What Is Truth?"—Jaques.

### ELDER STEPHEN L RICHARDS

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

I am convinced that we cannot afford to be so distracted by the exigencies which these perilous times have put upon us as to forget the fundamental institutions, principles and virtues upon which our national life and civilization are founded. We of the Church are constantly having our attention directed to these fundamentals and they have been and will be made the subject matter for addresses at this Conference. It is upon one of these fundamental institutions of society that I wish to speak today—the home. I am painfully aware of the fact that I can scarcely hope to add a single new thought to this old subject. I am hopeful, however, that I may be able to refresh your own thinking a little about this all-important institution.

#### THE FAMILY RELATIONSHIP THE FIRST FORM OF GOVERNMENT

To get anything like an adequate idea of the place of the home in our civilization and society, I think it necessary to look back upon its history.

It would not be possible to trace even the outline of its development in the time allotted to me. May I, however, merely call attention to a few well recognized facts concerning it. The government initiated in and growing out of the home was the first known form of human government. The head of the family came to be the chieftain of the tribe or clan and his lineal descendants were accorded the inherited right of sovereignty. The patriarchs were not only prophets, they were law-givers and their peoples were submissive to their will. In this respect earthly governments came to be prototypes of divine government, for the very genius of divine government is fatherhood and a recognition of the family relationship. God, the Creator, is the Father, the Proprietor, and the Ruler; men, the children, bound by the ties of filial obli-

gation, are the subjects of government,—amenable in all respects to the will and dictates of the Father.

Then, too, throughout the history of civilization, blood ties and race have been the strongest cohesive factors in the grouping of society. Many of the greatest nations have been but enlarged families with blood strains of remarkable purity.

#### THE HOME THE FOUNDATION OF SOCIETY

The home has ever been the center of economic interest. It has undoubtedly produced a greater part of the wealth of the world and it has also spent it.

It is the primary educational institution. Important as schools have been they have never occupied a position more than complementary to the home, which is the nursery not only of all human beings but of all virtue.

Governments which have attained high place in the world's history and affairs have, I think without exception, been those which have given due recognition to the home as a fundamental institution of society. They have enacted laws for its protection and advancement, and crimes against the home and its sanctity have been regarded as among the most heinous offenses.

In this connection I recall the statement of an eminent man who at one time, speaking in the British House of Parliament against the imposition of a tax on the homes of the poor, said, in substance, "My home may be a poor and rude one; the roof may leak; the wind may enter; the rain may enter, but the King of England with all his army cannot enter. My home is my castle, sacred and inviolate to me and my family." Such a conception of home has lain at the very foundation of English and American law and government and that conception is in no small way responsible for the rights and liberties which we now enjoy.

#### VALUE OF OLD-FASHIONED HOME LIFE

What is its prospect in this dramatic evolution of persons, things and institutions which is now in process? I would not venture a sure prediction but I do agree with Dr. Henry Van Dyke who said that "If old-fashioned American family life vanishes nothing can take its place."

What was an old-fashioned American home, or rather I should say, what is it, because I am thankful to note that there are still some such homes left in the land? You know what it is. You know that it is not just a house, however grand and imposing the house may be and however embellished it may be with costly furniture, rich hangings and floor coverings woven of the toil of far-off Persia. You know that it is not a mansion wherein reside a man and a woman, fretting under the bonds of a marriage contract, a poodle dog and a retinue of servants whose chief function it is to see that the three chief occupants of the house, the man, the wife and the dog, enjoy equality of right and privilege. And you know that such an old-fashioned home is not ordinarily located

among the costly residences of the rich. You know that it is usually to be found among the modest and humble, but not among the poor of the land for they are not truly poor who maintain a real home. You know that in an old-fashioned American home you will find a large family of happy boys and girls, for whom father and mother willingly, patiently and lovingly devote lives of toil and service; not for ostentation and pride and the gratification of selfish desires but to fulfill high conceptions of duty and the laws of God. Are such homes happy?

#### AN IDEAL HOME

I used to live in the heart of a city. My nearest neighbor lived in a real home. He had a yard in which his children might play. They had flowers and gardens, trees and welcome shade from the summer sun. His girls, educated, cultured and refined helped their mother with housework. His boys assisted in keeping up the place outside. They loved their home. It belonged to them all. The feeling of ownership and proprietorship was with them. It begat thrift, economy and industry. Their common interest stimulated mutual confidence and affection that cement and enrich the natural ties of family. They were happy and content and they were splendid citizens.

#### FAMILY LIFE IN APARTMENTS NOT IDEAL

Most of the other people who resided in my neighborhood lived in large apartment houses. Some few had children. These boys and girls had no yards, no gardens, no flowers, no places to play, no property to care for and no responsibility. They came to my lot and my neighbor's. I did not blame them. They had no place to go. They injured and destroyed the flowers, shrubs, and lawns and other property. I forgave them. They had had nothing of their own of similar kind consequently they had never learned how to care for property.

The girls who lived in these apartments did not do housework. There was not much to be done, and besides they had no time for it because it takes all the time of these girls to take care of themselves. It is a big job. Their first task of the day is to prepare themselves for public presentation. I have not time to describe the perplexities of that operation. Suffice it to say that it requires a very great deal of labor and material to produce the finished product. Then there are the daily movies, the teas, the auto rides, the dances and the cabarets all requiring constant re-arrangement of toilet and appearance and involving an immense expenditure of energy. These girls of the apartments are really hard-working girls. They have my sympathy, but like the boys they do not have real homes, and I fear they are not learning to be real women.

Yet this life of the apartment is the new home life; perhaps here depicted in the extreme. Its advocates say that it is more desirable than the old home life; that it has more conveniences, ease and luxury and less of work and responsibility. They clinch the argument by declaring that it costs less. It does, and it is worth less. The old-fashioned American

family life costs more but it is worth more. It costs more in work, self-sacrifice, patience, sleepless nights, heart-aches, and loving service, but the smile of a babe, the kiss of a beautiful daughter, and the handclasp of a manly boy are worth more than all the cost.

#### REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAKING OF GOOD HOMES

The cry of the world is for men and women. I know of no place where they can be found except in the homes of the people. The homes which produce real men and women must be presided over and maintained by men of strength and courage, of virtue and of vision, and by women of tenderness, unselfishness, and infinite patience and love—endowments of God for the motherhood of the race. Good living is the first requirement of every parent. God pity the unfortunate parent who comes to the realization, as some day all must surely do, that the sins of the child are chiefly attributable to his or her own bad example or neglect.

Criminologists tell us that most of our delinquencies originate in bad or neglected homes. Economists say that the training of the home is largely responsible for the thrift, industry, and prosperity of the nation. Doctors advise us that the health of the people depends on its care and teachings, and the eugenist assures us that the whole trend of human happiness, intelligence, goodness and endurance depends on it.

Do you know that statisticians have scientifically calculated that the United States will support a population of not to exceed two hundred million people, and that we are very rapidly approaching "this point of saturation"? The character of the nation and its destiny depend almost entirely on the families who shall make up the two hundred million. Will they be families descended from the old stocks of America who set up her great institutions and who have fought for and fostered her liberty, her equity and her justice, or will they be families in the stream of whose blood does not course the great impulses, the indomitable will, and idealism which have been and are the genius of our Democracy? Such questions must give pause and concern to every lover of America.

#### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF IDEAL HOMES A GREAT MISSION

To the members of our Church the home has an enlarged significance that is subordinate to nothing else in life, for it constitutes not only the source of our greatest happiness here in this life, but also the foundation of our exaltation and glory in the life to come. After all, it is essentially a religious institution. It has its origin in religious ceremony. It is the fulfillment of divine command. Its government is of a religious nature, and the finest of its products are spiritual.

So it is here in the humble and yet exalted institution of the home that I find the greatest opportunity and mission for men and women. I am sorry to say, however, that the record does not in all cases disclose a very creditable response to this big opportunity and obligation. Modern education has not always produced good home makers. Recently published data informs us that the average number of children in the fam-

ilies of the boot-blacks of America is slightly over four, while the average number of children in the families of school teachers is slightly under two. Now it may be that two school teachers exercise more and better influence than four boot-blacks, but how long will it take on the present respective rates of increase for the boot-blacks to crowd out the school teachers? I present this illustration from a popular scientist, not in derogation of people who follow humble vocations, but to emphasize the fact that the world supply of intelligence, goodness and beauty is largely a matter of propagation.

#### LATTER-DAY SAINT HOMES

There is in this respect a traditional and rather well advertised distinction which our people enjoy. They have been noted for their large families and had they been better understood they would be famous for their good families. Children have been our best crop and in the good old homes there has been an abundance of them. Eight, ten and a dozen in a family were common numbers.

What families they have been! In days of privation and striving how they have stood together! The sacrifices which they have made, one for another; the love, the service, and nobility which have come from these great homes will probably never be known to many, but those who know of it and speak of the accomplishments of our Church in the first century of its existence, mention first the noble fathers and mothers who in log cabins of the frontier or mansions of luxury have served faithfully as priests and priestesses in the temple of the home.

Our Church calls to its members and to all people to maintain the integrity, the purity and the high purposes of this sacred institution. I trust that no one will ever so yield to the insidious appeals of selfishness, vanity, and the world, as to be swerved from so doing.

#### CHILDREN THE JOY OF THE HOME

To warn of a great danger I must speak of it more specifically. I do so most reverently. If it shall please the Lord to send to your home a goodly number of children, I hope, I pray, you will not deny them entrance. If you should, it would cause you infinite sorrow and remorse. One has said that he could wish his worst enemy no more hell than this, that in the life to come someone might approach him and say, "I might have come down into the land of America and done good beyond computation, but if I came at all I had to come through your home and you were not man enough or woman enough to receive me. You broke down the frail footway on which I must cross and then you thought you had done a clever thing."

#### ETERNITY OF THE MARRIAGE COVENANT

I said that for our Church the home had a great religious significance. We believe that the marriage compact is not for life only or "until death doth part" but for all eternity; that when the covenant is

entered into in the proper manner and place and sealed by the power of the Holy Priesthood, which is the delegated authority of God to man, it becomes an everlasting union, an eternal institution into which there shall enter all children born in such wedlock, and that the ties of kinship so created are eternal ties recognized in heaven as on earth. Our heaven is little more than a projection of the sacred institutions of our homes into eternity.

The spirits of men, which are the literal children of the Father, are by Him permitted to take on mortality through a home, it being the chief purpose of the administrators of the home to guide the spirits so entrusted to their keeping back to the eternal presence whence they came.

So it is that we strive so diligently to maintain our children in the bond of this eternal covenant and union. We do not fear death because death does not break this bond. We must all go by way of it to find place in the eternal family circle. But we do fear sin that may deprive us of the presence of a loved one when we meet in our future homes.

We deplore divorce. It strikes at the very foundation of the home. The number of divorces among our people is relatively low.

Perhaps this mere glimpse into our philosophy of life and heaven and exaltation will serve to justify our undying interest in the homes of the people.

We rely on these institutions to produce the manhood and the womanhood for the Church and the nation. Respect for law, order and established institutions must come from good family life if it comes at all. Boys and girls who grow up to call father "the old man" and mother "the old woman" are not likely to be easily amenable to the necessary restrictions which society imposes. If they cannot respect and love home and parents, their affection and regard for any worthy cause and institution are doubtful.

#### RELIGION A SAFEGUARD

So, I do not question the dominant place of home in our civilization, but I am concerned about the kind of homes we shall maintain. I believe the nation would be infinitely more secure if the influence of pure religion could come to every home. I have confidence in family prayer. It would be far better if the Sabbath were observed as a holy day rather than a holiday. The enemies of society are not reverent, God-loving people.

We live in a Christian nation, founded on Christian principles. The only real hope for the world lies in the democracy and altruism of Christ. Christian homes are the answer.

Years ago it was a common thing to see in houses placards or framed mottos, worked in attractive designs and colors, hung over walls and mantels, bearing the inscription: "God bless our home." It is not fashionable to display these mottos now. One never sees them any more. I trust, however, that if they may not hereafter hang on the walls of our houses, they may be deeply inscribed in our hearts. God bless our homes!